



## Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins



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# Justice Department moves to cancel police reform settlements reached with Minneapolis and Louisville

By **STEVE KARNOWSKI and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER**  
**Associated Press**

**MINNEAPOLIS (AP)** — The Justice Department moved Wednesday to cancel settlements with Minneapolis and Louisville that called for an overhaul of their police departments following the killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor that became the catalyst for nationwide racial injustice protests in the summer of 2020.

The Trump administration also announced it was retracting the findings of Justice Department investigations into six other police departments that the Biden administration had accused of civil rights violations.

The moves represent a dramatic about-face for a department that under Democratic President Joe Biden had aggressively pushed for federal oversight of local police forces it accused of widespread abuses. The Trump administration accused previous Justice Department leadership of using flawed legal theories to judge police departments and pursuing costly and burdensome court-enforced settlements known as consent decrees to address alleged prob-



In this May 25, 2020, file pool photo from police body camera video, shows George Floyd responding to police after they approached his car outside Cup Foods in Minneapolis.

**Associated Press**

lems it argues are better dealt with at the local level. "It's our view at the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division under the Trump administration that federal micromanagement of local police should be a rare exception, and not the norm," Assistant Attorney General Harmmeet Dhillon, the new leader of the division, told reporters.

The Justice Department announced its decision just before the five-year anniversary of the murder of George Floyd. Then-officer Derek Chauvin used his

knee on May 25, 2020, to pin the Black man to the pavement for 9 1/2 minutes in a case that sparked protests around the world and a national reckoning with racism and police brutality. The Biden administration launched pattern-and-practice investigations into police departments across the country, uncovering issues such as racial discrimination and excessive force. The Justice Department in the final weeks of the previous administration reached consent decree agreements with Minne-

apolis and Louisville but the settlements had yet to be approved by a judge.

Police reform advocates denounced the move to walk away from the agreements, saying a lack of federal oversight will put communities at risk.

"This move isn't just a policy reversal. It's a moral retreat that sends a chilling message that accountability is optional when it comes to Black and Brown victims," said the Rev. Al. Sharpton, who worked with the Floyd and Taylor families to push for police accountability.

"Trump's decision to dismiss these lawsuits with prejudice solidifies a dangerous political precedent that police departments are above scrutiny, even when they've clearly demonstrated a failure to protect the communities they're sworn to serve."

Kristen Clarke, who led the Civil Rights Division under the Biden administration, defended the findings of the police investigations of her office, noting that they were "led by career attorneys, based on data, body camera footage and information provided by officers themselves."

"To wholesale ignore and disregard these systemic violations, laid bare in well-documented and detailed public reports, shows patent disregard for our federal civil rights and the Constitution," Clarke said in a statement to The Associated Press.

The Trump administration said it was also reviewing more than a dozen police consent decrees that remain in place across the U.S. The Justice Department would have to convince a judge to back away from those already-finalized settlements a move that some communities may oppose. □

## Trump administration asks Supreme Court to block watchdog access to DOGE documents

By **MARK SHERMAN**  
**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Trump administration on Wednesday asked the Supreme Court to block court orders requiring Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency to turn over documents about its operations to a government watchdog group.

The Justice Department's latest emergency appeal to the high court concerns whether DOGE, which has been central to President Donald Trump's push to remake the government, is a federal agency that is subject to the Freedom of Information Act. The ad-

ministration argues DOGE is merely a presidential advisory body that is exempt from requests for documents under FOIA.

The administration wants the justices to freeze orders that would force DOGE to turn over documents to Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington and have acting DOGE administrator Amy Gleason answer questions under oath within the next three weeks. CREW sued in February, claiming that DOGE "wields shockingly broad power" with no transparency about its actions.

In March, U.S. District Judge

Christopher Cooper found that DOGE's role is likely more than just advisory, noting its claims in helping to shutter USAID and cut billions of dollars in government contracts. "Canceling any government contract would seem to require substantial authority and canceling them on this scale certainly does," Cooper wrote. DOGE "likely has at least some independent authority to identify and terminate federal employees, federal programs, and federal contracts."

A panel of the federal appeals court in Washington initially put Cooper's order

on hold, but a different panel later reinstated the order. Cooper has since

set deadlines for the administration to comply by June 13. □



President Donald Trump speaks in the Oval Office of the White House, Tuesday, May 20, 2025, in Washington.

**Associated Press**



# Majority of U.S. states now have laws banning or regulating cellphones in schools, with more to follow

By JEFF AMY  
Associated Press

**ATLANTA (AP)** — Florida was the first state to pass a law regulating the use of cellphones in schools in 2023. Just two years later, more than half of all states have laws in place, with more likely to act soon. Bills have sprinted through legislatures this year in states as varied as New York and Oklahoma, reflecting a broad consensus that phones are bad for kids.

Connecticut state Rep. Jennifer Leeper, a Democrat and co-chair of the General Assembly's Education Committee, on May 13 called phones "a cancer on our kids" that are "driving isolation, loneliness, decreasing attention and having major impacts both on social-emotional well-being but also learning."

Republicans express similar sentiments. "This is a not just an academic bill," Republican Rep. Scott Hilton said after Georgia's bill, which only bans phones in grades K-8, passed in March. "This is a mental health bill. It's a public safety bill."

So far, 26 states have passed laws, with eight other states and the District of Columbia implementing rules or making recommendations to local districts. Of the states, 17 have acted this year. Just Tuesday, Nebraska Republican Gov. Jim Pillen signed a law banning phones throughout the school day. Earlier Tuesday, Alaska lawmakers required schools to regulate cellphones when they overrode an education package Republican Gov. Mike Dunleavy had vetoed for unrelated reasons.

More action is coming as bills await a governor's signature or veto in Florida, Missouri, Nebraska and New Hampshire.

## Increasing focus on banning phones throughout the school day

When Florida first acted, lawmakers ordered schools to ban phones during instructional time while allow-



A phone holder hangs in a classroom at Delta High School, Friday, Feb. 23, 2024, in Delta, Utah. Associated Press

ing them between classes or at lunch. But now there's another bill awaiting Gov. Ron DeSantis' action that goes further. It would ban phones for the entire school day for elementary and middle schools.

Ten states and the District of Columbia have enacted school day bans, most for students in grades K-12, and they now outnumber the seven states with instructional time bans. North Dakota Republican Gov. Kelly Armstrong called the ban throughout the school day that he signed into law "a huge win."

"Teachers wanted it. Parents wanted it. Principals wanted it," Armstrong said. Armstrong recently visited a grade school with such a ban in place. He said he saw kids engaging with each other and laughing at tables during lunch.

The "bell-to-bell" bans have been promoted in part by ExceInEd, the education think tank founded by former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush. The group's political affiliate has been active in lobbying for bans.

Nathan Hoffman, ExceInEd's senior director of state policy and advocacy, said barring phones throughout the day heads off problems outside of

class, like when students set up or record fights in halls. "That's often when you get some of your biggest behavioral issues, whether they go viral or not," Hoffman said.

## Other states want school districts to set their own rules

But other states, particularly where there are strong traditions of local school control, are mandating only that school districts adopt some kind of cellphone policy, believing districts will take the hint and sharply restrict phone access. In Maine, where some lawmakers originally proposed a school day ban, lawmakers are now considering a rewritten bill that would only require a policy.

And there have been a few states where lawmakers failed to act at all. Maybe the most dramatic was in Wyoming, where senators voted down a bill in January, with some opponents saying teachers or parents should set the rules.

Where policymakers have moved ahead, there's a growing consensus around exceptions. Most states are letting students use electronic devices to monitor medical needs and meet the terms of their special education plans. Some are allowing exceptions for

translation devices if English isn't a student's first language or when a teacher wants students to use devices for classwork.

There are some unusual exceptions, too. South Carolina's original policy allowed an exception for students who are volunteer firefighters. West Virginia's new law allows smartwatches as long as they are not being used for communication.

## Some parents and students oppose the rules

But by far the most high-profile exception has been allowing cellphone use in case of emergencies. One of the most common parent objections to a ban is that they would not be able to contact their child in a crisis like a school shooting. "It was only through text messages that parents knew what was happening," said Tinya Brown, whose daughter is a freshman at Apalachee High School, northeast of Atlanta, where a shooting killed two students and two teachers in September. She spoke against Georgia's law at a news conference in March.

Some laws call for schools to find other ways for parents to communicate with their children at schools, but most lawmakers say they support giving students ac-

cess to their cellphones, at least after the immediate danger has passed, during an emergency.

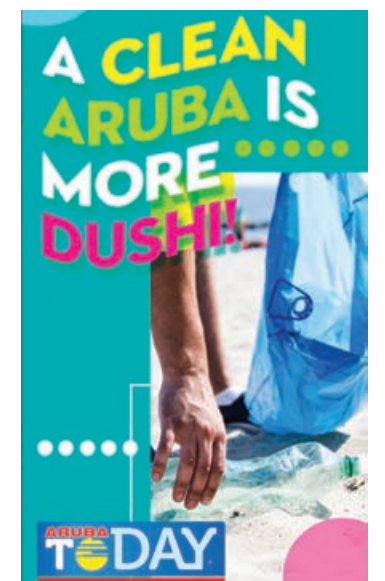
In some states, students have testified in favor of regulations, but it's also clear that many students, especially in high schools, are chafing under the rules. Kaytlin Villescas, a sophomore at Prairieville High School, in the suburbs of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is one student who took up the fight against bans, starting a petition and telling WBRZ-TV in August that Louisiana's law requiring a school day ban is misguided. She argued that schools should instead teach responsible use.

"It is our proposition that rather than banning cellphone use entirely, schools should impart guidelines on responsible use, thereby building a culture of respect and self-regulation," Villescas wrote in an online petition.

## Most states provide no funding to carry out laws

A few states have provided money for districts to buy lockable phone storage pouches or other storage solutions. New York, for example, plans to spend \$13.5 million. But states have typically provided no cash. New Hampshire lawmakers stripped a proposed \$1 million from their bill.

"Providing some specific money for this would kind of ease some of those implementation challenges," Hoffman said. "That said, most states have not." □





## Former New York state trooper pleads guilty to faking his own shooting

By PHILIP MARCELO

Associated Press

**MINEOLA, N.Y. (AP)** — A former New York state trooper pleaded guilty Wednesday to charges that he shot himself then falsely claimed he was wounded by an unknown gunman on a Long Island highway, prompting a regionwide search.

Thomas Mascia agreed to serve six months in jail, followed by five years probation and continued mental health treatment as he formally changed his not guilty plea during a court appearance in Nassau County court in Mineola.

He also agreed, as part of his plea deal, to pay \$289,000 in restitution for the overtime costs for officers during the three-day search for a nonexistent suspect.

The 27-year-old West Hempstead resident had been charged with official misconduct, tampering with evidence and falsifying documents. He became a trooper in 2019 and resigned in January after being suspended without pay while state police launched a criminal investigation into the shooting.

Mascia's parents, Dorothy and Thomas, also pleaded guilty Wednesday to possessing an illegal firearm,



Former New York state trooper Thomas Mascia leaves Nassau County court in Mineola, N.Y. on Wednesday, May 21, 2025, after pleading guilty to charges that he shot himself and lied about it. Associated Press

which was found during a search of the family's home.

Mascia claimed he was shot in the leg on Oct. 30 by a driver parked on the shoulder of the Southern State Parkway, about a mile from his home.

Instead, prosecutors say, he staged the scene of the alleged shooting by scattering shell casings, then shot himself at a park, stashed the .22-caliber rifle, drove back to the highway and

called for backup.

Nassau County District Attorney Anne Donnelly said after Wednesday's hearing that "one of the most disturbing parts" of the case was that he intentionally set in motion a potentially dangerous search.

Mascia described the fictitious driver as a "dark-skinned" man wearing a balaclava that exposed only his eyes. He also claimed the suspect fled in a car bearing temporary

New Jersey plates heading toward New York City.

"If someone had been stopped that fit the description? Who knows what would have happened?" the district attorney said. "It's just a frightening thought."

Donnelly said the ruse was an apparent bid to gain sympathy from a former girlfriend and that state police are also looking into an accident Mascia was involved in while serving as a

trooper upstate.

During Wednesday's proceedings, prosecutors asked the former trooper a series of questions confirming the sequence of events. "You knew this was a lie and chose to do it anyway?" Jared Rosenblatt of the district attorney's office asked at the end of the questions.

"Yes," Mascia replied in a low voice.

The former trooper and his parents didn't respond to reporters as they left the courthouse with their lawyers. They're scheduled to be sentenced Aug. 20.

The family had appeared in court earlier this month to change their pleas, but the judge at the time halted the proceedings after Mascia said he did not feel well mentally.

Jeffrey Lichtman, Mascia's lawyer, said after the hearing that his client was suffering from an undiagnosed mental health problem at the time of the shooting and is now being treated.

"While this is a dark day for him, he is happy to put this in the past and move forward with his life," he said. "He apologizes to anyone affected by his lapse in judgment and hopes his community will forgive him." □

## Justice Dept. investigating former New York Gov. Cuomo over pandemic testimony, AP source says



Former New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo speaks during the New York City Mayoral Candidates Forum at Medgar Evers College Wednesday, April 23, 2025, in New York.

Associated Press

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER and ERIC TUCKER

Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Justice Department has opened a criminal investigation into former New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo after congressional Republicans recommended that he be charged with lying over his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, a person familiar with the matter said Tuesday.

The investigation by the U.S. attorney's office in Washington follows a referral from Rep. James Comer, Republican chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, over statements Cuomo made to lawmakers investigating his management of the pandemic when the virus was spreading through nursing homes, the person said. The person was not authorized to discuss the investigation

publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The investigation plunges the Justice Department yet again into New York politics as Cuomo runs for New York City mayor. It comes just months after federal prosecutors abandoned a corruption case against New York Mayor Eric Adams, who is running for a second term. They cited a desire to free Adams up to cooperate with the Trump administration's immigration crackdown.

A spokesperson for Cuomo said Tuesday that the former governor was never informed of any such investigation.

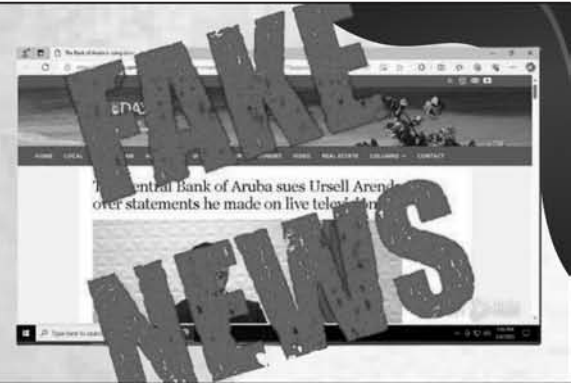
"So why would someone leak it now?" Rich Azzopardi said in an email. "The answer is obvious: This is lawfare and election interference plain and simple something President Trump and his top Department of Justice officials say they are against." □



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## Report: World's supply of critical minerals for clean energy is concentrated in fewer countries

By DAVID McHUGH and AL-EXA ST. JOHN

Associated Press

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)

— The world's sources of critical minerals are increasingly concentrated in just a few countries, most notably China, leaving the global economy vulnerable to supply cutoffs that could disrupt industry and hit consumers with higher prices, a report said Wednesday.

The Paris-based International Energy Agency's report looked at the availability of minerals and metals that may be small in quantity but large in impact when it comes to shifting the economy away from fossil fuels toward electricity and renewable energy.

It found that for copper, lithium, cobalt, graphite and rare earth elements, the average market share of the three top producing countries rose to 86% in 2024 from 82% in 2020.

China is the leading refiner for 19 out of 20 strategic minerals studied in the report, and has an average



Bundles of copper cables sit at a plant that produces parts for large electric vehicles in Mexico City, on April 2, 2025.

share of around 75%. Indonesia showed strong growth in nickel, a key component in making steel and batteries for electric vehicles.

The current trend toward export restrictions and trade disputes increases concerns, the IEA said.

"Critical mineral supply chains can be highly vul-

nerable to supply shocks, be they from extreme weather, a technical failure or trade disruptions," said IEA executive director Fatih Birol. "The impact of a supply shock can be far-reaching, bringing higher prices for consumers and reducing industrial competitiveness."

Birol cited the energy crisis in Europe after Russia cut off natural gas supplies over the invasion of Ukraine. Another cautionary tale is the global shortage of silicon-based computer chips during and after the pandemic, which disrupted auto production.

"The golden rule of energy

security is diversification," Birol told The Associated Press in an interview. "And it goes beyond energy security, it is also economic security."

Market forces are important in developing new sources but won't be enough. "There is a need for well-designed government policies" in the form of financing and other measures, he said.

China is a massive global source of critical minerals required for a wide range of goods that includes computer chips, robots, electric autos, batteries, drones, and military equipment. It also dominates the refining and processing of many of these critical minerals, including lithium, cobalt, graphite and more.

China has placed export limits of many of these key products and tightened controls on others as President Donald Trump's trade negotiations escalate, stifling U.S. industry and the nation's ability to find quick alternatives. □

Associated Press

## Thailand vows to tighten control on cannabis after smuggling cases involving tourists soar



Police stand guard as cannabis activists and entrepreneurs, holding cannabis plant gather in front of Government House in Bangkok, Thailand, Monday, July 8, 2024.

Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Thai officials on Wednesday said they planned to tighten regulations on cannabis sales after cases of tourists attempting to smuggle the drug out of the country soared in recent months.

Thailand became the first country in Asia to decriminalize cannabis in 2022, which has boosted Thailand's tourism and farming and spawned thousands of shops. But it's facing public backlash over allegations that under-regulation has made the drug available to children and caused addiction.

The ruling Pheu Thai Party has promised to criminalize the drugs again, but faced strong resistance from its partner in the

coalition government which supported the decriminalization.

Thailand's Health Minister Somsak Thepsutin said at a press conference that officials are aiming to roll out new regulations in coming weeks that will tighten control on the sale of cannabis, including requiring shops to sell cannabis only to customers who have a prescription.

He emphasized that it is against Thai law to bring cannabis out of the country without permission from the authorities.

Airport officials said they have tightened inspections to detect smuggling attempts, adding that most people found with cannabis in their luggage are foreigners, especially Indian and British nationals. □



# North Korean defectors urge the U.N. to hold the country's leader accountable for rights abuses

By **EDITH M. LEDERER**

**Associated Press**

**UNITED NATIONS (AP)** —

Eunju Kim, who escaped starvation in North Korea in 1999, was sent back from China and fled a second time, told the United Nations on Tuesday that the country's leader must be held accountable for gross human rights violations.

Gyuri Kang, whose family faced persecution for her grandmother's religious beliefs, fled the North during the COVID-19 pandemic. She told the General Assembly that three of her friends were executed two for watching South Korean TV dramas.

At the high-level meeting of the 193-member world body, the two women, both now living in South Korea, described the plight of North Koreans who U.N. special investigator Elizabeth Salmón said have been living in "absolute isolation" since the pandemic began in early 2020.

Thousands of North Koreans have fled the country since the late 1990s, but the num-



**In this photo provided by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, center, inspects the military exercises at an undisclosed place in North Korea, Tuesday, May 13, 2025.**

**Associated Press**

bers have dwindled drastically in recent years.

Salmón said North Korea's closure of its borders worsened an already dire human rights situation, with new laws enacted since 2020 and stricter punishments, including the death

penalty and public executions.

In another rights issue, she said, the deployment of North Korean troops to support Russia in its war against Ukraine has raised concerns about "the poor human rights conditions of

its soldiers while in service, and the government's widespread exploitation of its own people."

The North's "extreme militarization" enables it to keep the population under surveillance and it exploits the work force through a

state-controlled system that finances its expanding nuclear program and military ventures, Salmón said. North Korea's U.N. Ambassador Kim Song called the allegations that his country violates human rights "a burlesque of intrigue and fabrication" and insisted that tens of millions of North Koreans enjoy human rights under the country's socialist system.

He accused the West of being the bigger violator, through racial discrimination, human trafficking and sexual slavery.

But the two defectors and human rights defenders detailed numerous abuses. Kim, who said her father died of starvation, told U.N. diplomats that after making it to China across the Tumen River the first time, she, her mother and sister were sold for the equivalent of less than \$300 to a Chinese man.

Three years later, they were arrested and sent back to the North. In 2002, they escaped again across the river. □

## Guyana's army chief says Venezuelans participating in Essequibo vote risk arrest

By **BERT WILKINSON**

**Associated Press**

**GEORGETOWN, Guyana**

**(AP)** —

Guyana's defense chief warned on Wednesday that any residents who participate in upcoming elections organized by neighboring Venezuela over a disputed region will be charged with treason and other felony crimes.

"If anyone participates or takes any similar action, it will amount to support for a passive coup," Brig. Gen. Omar Khan told The Associated Press. "Anything along those lines will speak to a violation of our sovereignty and territorial integrity."

The May 25 election organized by Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro is the latest step in a push to annex the Essequibo region, which Venezuela has long claimed as its own.

Venezuelans living in Guy-

ana who become involved in Sunday's elections could also face arrest and deportation, Khan added.

Nearly 100,000 people of direct or indirect Venezuelan ancestry currently live

in Guyana, according to Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud.

"Shouldn't this reality give all Guyanese a cause to be alert? People's vigilance is equivalent to people's

power and defense," Persaud said in a recent social media post.

The Essequibo region represents two-thirds of Guyana and is rich in gold, diamonds, timber and other natural resources. It also is located close to massive offshore oil deposits, with current production averaging some 650,000 barrels daily.

On Sunday, Venezuelans will head to the polls to elect governors and lawmakers, as well as officials who would supposedly administer the Essequibo region.

In 2023, Maduro threatened to annex the region by force after holding a referendum asking voters if Essequibo should be turned into a Venezuelan state.

The dispute over the region began more than a century ago, when an interna-

tional tribunal in 1899 drew the border between the South American neighbors. In 2018, Guyana went to the International Court of Justice and asked judges to uphold the 1899 ruling. Meanwhile, Venezuela has dismissed the border drawn more than a century ago, noting Guyana was still a British colony. It has argued that a 1966 agreement to resolve the dispute effectively nullified the original arbitration.

The case is still pending in court while tensions between the two countries keep rising despite an emergency summit held in late 2023 to diffuse the situation.

Last week, Guyana's government reported three separate attacks from the Venezuelan side on Guyanese soldiers patrolling a border river. □



**A youth drives a motorcycle in front of a mural of a map of Venezuela with the Essequibo territory, a swath of land administered and controlled by Guyana but claimed by Venezuela, in the 23 de Enero neighborhood of Caracas, Venezuela, Dec. 11, 2023.**

**Associated Press**



## ACF invites you to another Rough Hike!

(Oranjestad)—Greet the warm morning sun in Aruba's diverse nature during another edition of Rough Hike through Arikok, organized regularly by the Aruba Conservation Foundation. This hike allows you to get up and close to nature as you trail under the guidance of an experienced ranger.

Date: Sunday, 25 May 2025  
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The hike starts at the Parke Nacional Arikok Visitor Center in San Fuego, Santa Cruz. From there, a park ranger will guide you through Rooi Cacho, Sero Bushibi, Pega Sapato, Dos Playa, Rooi Tambu and Northern Loop. So put on your hiking shoes and get ready to explore the rough terrains of Arikok, learn about Aruba's treasured nature and the importance of preservation! Register through this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/AbMevyU8J6> or call ACF at 585-1234. □



**(Oranjestad) - Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.**

### Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

### Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Sometimes, due to the need of a quick "to-go" breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

### Main Meal

The main meal is typically eaten in most households around noon or in

the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed or fried—with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can be largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands\* include sopi di bonchi cora (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew), comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

### Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening "meal" can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

### (Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every cul-

## Food culture in Aruba

ture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham\* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch. Desserts include, bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo preto (dark fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

### Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco\*, basket, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at lo-



cal snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun. □

\*ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao

\*Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)

\*Saco: Saco literally means "bag". Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.

Source: Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba





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## Experience a taste of Belgium in Aruba – Only at L'Avenue, Palm Beach



Nestled in the heart of Palm Beach, Aruba, L'Avenue brings a fresh breeze of Belgian charm to the Caribbean. Just over a year since its grand opening, this intimate bistro has quickly made its mark with its warm hospitality, authentic cuisine, and elegant yet approachable ambiance.

Whether you're strolling through Palm Beach after a morning at the beach or looking for a special dinner spot, L'Avenue welcomes you with an inviting terrace, styl-

ish décor, and the comforting aroma of Belgian classics crafted to perfection. It's a place where locals, travelers, food lovers, and beer connoisseurs come together — united by a love for great food, heartfelt service, and that unmistakable European flair.

At L'Avenue, every dish tells a story — one of tradition, seasonality, and bold yet balanced flavors. From crispy croquettes and perfectly poured Belgian beers to steaming pots of fresh mussels

flown in weekly, the menu offers something both comforting and surprising.

Now Serving: Belgium's "White Gold" — White Asparagus Season Has Begun

Among Belgium's most celebrated seasonal delicacies is white asparagus, often referred to as "wit goud" — white gold. Harvested only a few weeks each spring, this rare vegetable is sought after for its delicate, buttery taste and soft, refined texture.

At L'Avenue, the white asparagus is prepared the traditional Belgian way: tender spears topped with finely chopped eggs, layered with ham, and gratinated with cheese until golden and bubbling. It's a dish that embodies the heart of Belgian cuisine — simple ingredients, elevated through care and technique.

With daily specials also showcasing this seasonal gem in creative ways, guests have plenty of opportunities to enjoy the white asparagus while it lasts. Plates start at just \$17, making it a luxurious yet accessible indulgence.



More Than a Bistro — A Culinary Destination

L'Avenue is more than just a place to eat — it's a culinary destination. A thoughtfully curated menu, an extensive selection of premium Belgian beers, and an atmosphere that balances European elegance with island ease make it one of the most talked-about dining spots in Aruba.

Whether you're looking for a casual lunch, a romantic dinner, or a celebratory evening with friends, L'Avenue delivers a dining experience that's as memorable as it is delicious. □

**Open daily for lunch and dinner**  
Located in the heart of Palm Beach, Aruba  
Come discover Belgium's best — right here at L'Avenue.

## Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Barceló Aruba All Inclusive!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing 2 Goodwill Ambassadors and 1 Distinguished visitor of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is pre-

sented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

**The three levels of honor are as follows:**

Distinguished Visitor (10>years con-

secutively visiting Aruba)  
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)  
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

**The honorees were:**

Goodwill Ambassadors  
Mr. Dominick & Mary Postorino from Maricopa Arizona, United States.  
Mr. Darren Cook from Aylesford Kent, United Kingdom.

**Distinguished Visitors**

Mr. Pete & Mrs. Kat Kiernan from Medford New York, United States.  
Ms. Marouska Heyliger representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Barceló Aruba All Inclusive bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented

them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- Spending time with friends
- Family
- Fun
- Aruba's restaurants & Bars
- Aruba's weather.
- Aruba is safe & secure.
- Great service everywhere.

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □





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**SPECIAL PROGRESSIVE GAME**  
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The Brownstone Ribs and Seafood | The Market  
Shalom Body & Soul Spa | Moments & Memories Jewelry  
Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard  
Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts  
Treasure Cove | El Patio Tacos & Tequila | M8 Boutique  
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Play Responsibly. Visit [www.gamblersanonymous.org](http://www.gamblersanonymous.org) if you or someone you know has a gambling problem.



**Fred de Jong presents the Aruba Frank Sinatra Show live at The Cinemas**



(Oranjestad)—Take advantage of your chance to lounge back and delight in the memorable melodies of one of the greatest entertainers of all time, Frank Sinatra. Join fellow Sinatra fans for a charming evening of music and entertainment LIVE at

**The Cinemas!**

Presented by tribute artist Fred de Jong, enjoy his beautiful rendition of some of Sinatra's best hits, including fan favorites from the legend like "Fly Me To The Moon", "My Way", "New

York – New York" and more! Sing along to some of Sinatra's rendition of classic Christmas songs and take in the experience in The Cinemas VIP lounging theater for only \$40 per person.

De Jong invites you to be a part of

a classy, beautiful evening of jazzy swing classics each Thursday from 7:30 PM to 8:30 PM at The Cinemas in Paseo Herencia. Seating is limited.

Book your seat now at [arubasinatra.com/book](http://arubasinatra.com/book). Food and drink not included. □



**Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins**

**According to Etnia Nativa, in the 18th century most of the inhabitants of Aruba were indigenous who lived on the north coast, one of the largest communities lived in Alto Vista.**

As they were very religious, they had a chief with the name of Antonio Silvester who guided them in the Christian life and it was he who decided to build a stone chapel with a roof of corn rods, which would serve as a place of prayer. In 1750 it was blessed by Father Algemesi who came from Coro-Venezuela and appointed Domingo Antonio Silvester as the island's first prosecutor in the name of the Spanish crown and

Rome. In 1752 the prosecution passed into the hands of Antonio Silvester's son-in-law, Miguel Álvarez, who continued to guide the parishioners in their prayers.

According to the book, The History of Alto Vista by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known when Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Spaniard. In 1780, father Joseph Antonio de la Vegal called Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife Anna Cathalina Tromp, "neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba" and thus they became natives.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants the

island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was the most infected, they began to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of Noord began to grow into a community till getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued to be celebrated at this sacred native place, with the custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista.

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest

Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these houses remain.

South of the chapel in the yard two graves can be observed, there was the cemetery which father Pablo de Algemesi blessed. It is not certain, but it is believed that the two graves belong to Antonio Silvester and Miguel Alvares, according to Nooyen. About 50 meters near the chapel there are

still the markings of an old house, where Antonio and Bernardino Silvester would have lived. About 200 meters from the chapel there is a water tank which the locals call Tanki Cacique. In the past this tank was closed. But mostly water was brought out from the Poz di Noord, a well dug in the sand.

The chapel can be viewed from basically any point in the north side, even from Paradera and Sero Plat. All the historical remains around the chapel provide us with an idea on how the old people of Alto Vista used to live. Don't miss the opportunity to visit a place of historical significance with a window to Aruba's past. □



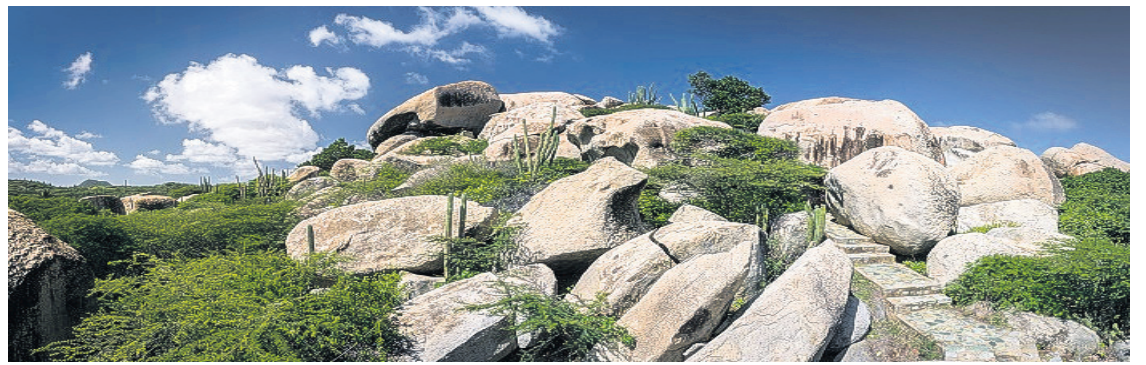
## Ayo & Casibari: Aruba's famous rock formations

(Oranjestad)—The Ayo and Casibari Rock Formations are known locally as one of the crucial sites to have in your “off-road” trip itinerary. These naturally formed rock formations as just one of the few places on the island that hold a rich history of our culture and of our ancestors.

### Ayo

The Ayo Rock Formation is located in the northern

part of the island, right on the road that leads you to the Black Stone Beach, and close to the Natural Bridge. The Ayo is a fenced terrain that consists of several giant boulders, resting neatly on top of or side by side each other, adding gorgeous natural architecture to the surrounding “mondi”\*. This is also one of the few sites to contain prehistoric markings of our indigenous ancestors. The Ayo Rock forma-



tion contains stairs that lead you to the top of the highest boulder, offering a breathtaking view of the Aruban

backyard. The Ayo is usually quiet, as it is situated farther away from the busier parts of the island. However, this is just another charm of the site: the quiet area and the refreshing breeze offer a sense of comfort and peace.

### Casibari

Probably the busier rock formation site, the Casibari is situated more in the center of the island, much closer—and more accessible—to the general public. Just like Ayo, Casibari is a fenced area containing several boulders that lay on top or lean on each other. The best aspect of the Casibari Rock Formation is the accompanying view when you climb up the top of the round, flat bolder. For this position, you can see the majority of the

island and the ocean in the south. Right in front of the entrance, there is the Casibari Café and Grill, a great place to get refreshments and snack before continuing your off-road adventure!

Both sites are open free to the public, 24 hours a day. However, unless you are taking a trip with a professional tour guide, there are no guides at the sites to help you climb the rock. So, do be careful when trudging on the boulders, and make sure to befriend any roaming goats you see along the way!

\*Mondi: what we call our Aruban wilderness. We don't have forests, or deserts, but we do have mondi! □



## Blackstone Beach



(Oranjestad)—Named after its most recognizable feature, the Blackstone Beach almost represents the opposite of the typical Aruban beaches. For one, it has black sand and is covered in black smooth stones. Secondly, it lies on the northern side of the island, away from the white sandy beaches of in the southern region. So, if you feel up for something different—or if it's opposite day, visit the Blackstone Beach.

Blackstone Beach shows the more natural side of Aruba: the stones that cover the beaches and the shape of it has been crafted for thousand years via volcanic eruptions, coral reef movements and wave activity of the rural northern part of the island.

Located further east to the Natural Bridge and Andicuri Beach, the Blackstone Beach is relatively easy



to access. Once you get passed the Ayo Rock Formation, take the Andicuri road leading up to Andicuri Beach. There, you can park your car and take a 1km hike towards Blackstone Beach.

This beach forms part of the Arikok National Park and is therefore a site that is preserved. This is why it is also relatively untouched by commercial influences. Despite being called a beach, do note that it is not advised to swim in the water, as the

current is very strong and can easily stray you further in the wild ocean. However, you can still enjoy a spectacular view of the stones and the northern ocean that stretches out in front of the beach and take a picture with your friends or family! □



## Basic driving rules on Aruba: Roundabouts

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

### Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.

### Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it



is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far

left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the high way before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky to navigate...

### Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confused among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

### Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is

used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

### "Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located near the Talk of the Town hotel, west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! □





# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

## ACROSS

1 Ready product to hit

6 Espresso order

11 Dis-reputable

12 Was sore

13 Waffle topper

14 Sandwich start

15 Musk of Tesla

17 Sole

18 Cushy

20 "Fernando" group

22 Important time

23 Address

26 Nutball

28 Really dug

29 Thin

31 Genetic stuff

32 Campus bigwig

33 Bibliography abbr.

34 Blanched

36 Rigging support

38 Wonderland guest

40 Standard

43 Perfect

44 Paris subway

45 Grating sounds

46 Fire

## DOWN

1 Cart

2 Belonging to thee

3 Blatant

4 Ticket category

5 Keyboard goof

6 Research setting

7 Circus star

8 1990s

9 Blue hue

10 Water whirl

11 Cart

12 Belonging to thee

13 Blatant

14 Ticket category

15 Keyboard goof

16 Research setting

17 Circus star

18 1990s

19 Blue hue

20 Water whirl

21 Cart

22 Belonging to thee

23 Blatant

24 Ticket category

25 Keyboard goof

26 Research setting

27 Circus star

28 1990s

29 Blue hue

30 Water whirl

31 Cart

32 Belonging to thee

33 Blatant

34 Ticket category

35 Keyboard goof

36 Research setting

37 Circus star

38 1990s

39 Blue hue

40 Water whirl

41 Cart

42 Belonging to thee

43 Blatant

44 Ticket category

45 Keyboard goof

46 Research setting

M	E	A	D	M	I	L	S	A	P
A	X	L	E	O	N	E	I	D	A
G	A	L	L	A	S	T	R	A	Y
I	M	I	T	A	T	E	S		
		G	A	P	T	U	C	K	S
B	O	A	S	T	S	P	R	E	E
A	N	T				O	N	E	
S	L	O	P	S	P	A	C	T	S
S	Y	R	U	P	I	D	O		
		Z	I	P	C	O	D	E	S
S	I	Z	Z	L	E	R	I	L	E
A	T	O	L	L	S	E	L	S	A
M	O	D	E	S	T	D	E	E	R

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11					12				
13					14				
		15			16		17		
18	19				20	21			
22				23				24	25
26			27			28			
29					30			31	
		32					33		
34	35				36	37			
38				39		40		41	42
43						44			
45						46			

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-26

## CRYPTOQUOTE

H Y K F J H T Z K J K U , C H H P

G M Q B M F . S Z K J H T U S Q M U V M K A

G M Q B Q B K C M V K J H T ' Z K

C M D M F R ? — X H X L S Z C K J

Cryptoquote: YOU CAN'T GET  
SPOILED IF YOU DO YOUR OWN IRONING. —  
MERYL STREEP

# Cruise ship Schedule: May 20 - 30 2025

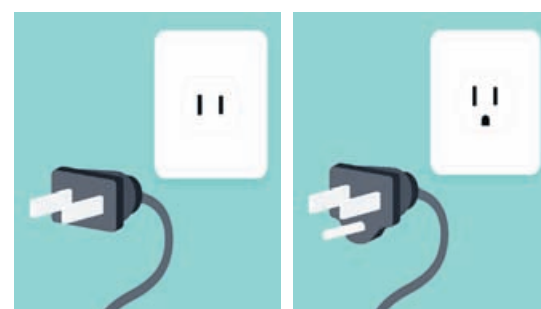
			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	20	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	07.00	16.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	C	1
WED	21	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION	08.00	22.00	C	1
		OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00	21.00	I	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	25	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	27	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C	1
WED	28	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
FRI	30	ISLAND PRINCESS	07.00	18.00	C	1

# Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

## Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



## Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



## Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



## Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.





# Hydrate. Make lists. Leave yourself time. And other tips for reducing holiday travel stress



Travelers move through Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport ahead of Memorial Day, Friday, May 24, 2024, in Atlanta. Associated Press

By **KATHERINE ROTH**  
Associated Press

Travel can be stressful in the best of times. Now add in the high-level anxiety that seems to be baked into every holiday season and it's clear that travelers could use some help calming frazzled nerves.

Travel pros say there is plenty you can do ahead of time to make for a happier and less-stressful holiday journey.

Make a list and check things off

A week before you leave, write down things you need to bring and tasks you need to do before the trip.

"This can include essential packing items, as well as simple tasks like clean-

ing out old food from the fridge or watering the plants," says Jess Feldman, special projects editor at Travel and Leisure magazine. "The key is to leave the list out for the entire week before you go. I cross the to-dos off throughout the week, and it helps me feel extremely prepared, lessening the stress every time."

Carry your comfort zone with you

Noise-canceling headphones can go a long way toward blocking out annoyances during travel, although if you use them you should keep an eye on display boards or your phone for any flight or gate changes.

Spotify, YouTube and other

sites offer music playlists with names like "Relaxing Chill Out Calming Music for Airports" and "Perfect Music Travel Relax." Or try "Music for Airports," a groundbreaking album that launched the ambient music genre in 1978.

It's also good to carry extra medications, a change of clothes, a toothbrush and a phone-charging cable, just in case. Bringing along some snacks or a sandwich from home can feel comforting and be a great alternative to pricey airport offerings. "I tend to pack for worst-case scenarios, such as flight delays and cancellations. This includes bringing things to do of course, like more than one book, knitting materials, or a few extra downloaded movies," Feldman says. For longer journeys, she might bring a meal in a Tupperware container. □

## Classifieds

### Marriott surf club

Palm beach  
Gold season  
2 BR Garden View \$10,000  
2 BR Ocean Side \$12,000  
Call :011-297-630-1307  
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

### Aruba Divi Phoenix

Palm beach  
Studio week # 18 room 1404  
Contract expire : 2051  
Price :\$ 7000  
Call :011-297-630-1307  
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

### House for sale

Washington noord  
5 min drive to palm beach and eagle beach  
3 BR 2 bath with 2 Apartments  
Price :\$ 650,000  
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johnnypaesch@gmail.com

### Condo for sale

Noord  
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Aruba live  
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Price :\$450,000  
Call :011-297-630-1307

### Condo for sale

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Palm Aruba  
10 min walk to palm beach  
2 BR 3 bath  
Price :\$550,000  
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johnnypaesch@gmail.com

### House for sale

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Pos chigito  
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3 BR 2 Bath with a studio  
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johnnypaesch@gmail.com

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Johnnypaesch@gmail.com



HEALTH

### DOCTOR ON DUTY

#### Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm  
Tel. 527 4000

#### San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours  
Tel.524 8833

### PHARMACY ON DUTY

#### Oranjestad:

Eagle: Tel.587 9011  
San Nicolas:  
Aloe:Tel.584 4606

### OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850  
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002  
Urgent Care 586 0448  
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic  
+297 588 0539

### EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

### TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

### TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

### AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank  
Tel. 588 0002  
FAVI- Visually Impaired  
Tel. 582 5051  
Alcoholics Anonymous  
Tel. 736 2952  
Narcotics Anonymous  
Tel. 583 8989  
Fundacion Contra Violencia  
Relacional Tel. 583 5400  
Centre for Diabetes  
Tel. 524 8888  
Child Abuse Prevention  
Tel. 582 4433  
Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

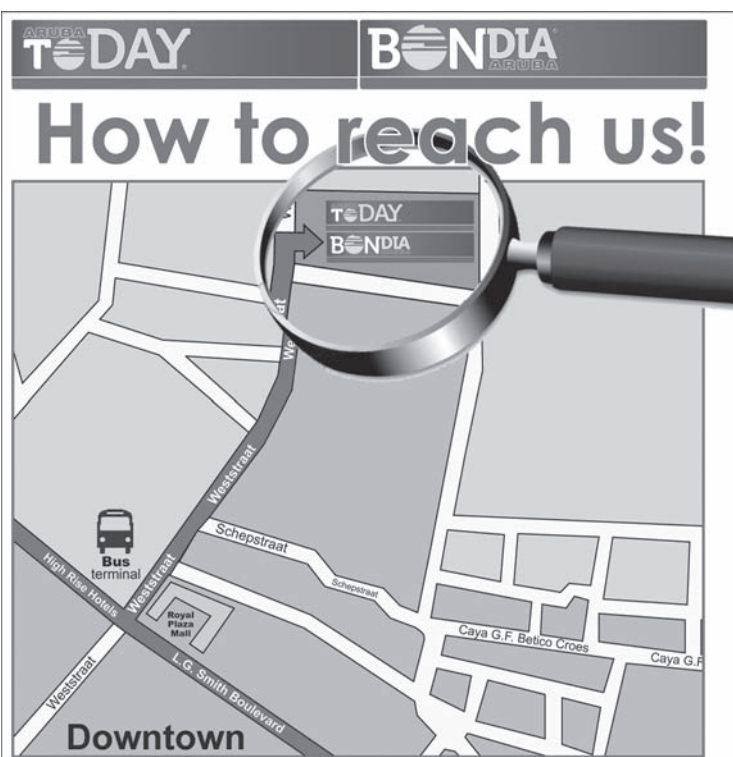
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**STOP**  
Violence Against Women



# Google's unleashes 'AI Mode' in the next phase of its journey to change search

By **MICHAEL LIEDTKE**  
AP Technology Writer

Google on Tuesday unleashed another wave of artificial intelligence technology to accelerate a year-long makeover of its search engine that is changing the way people get information and curtailing the flow of internet traffic to websites.

The next phase outlined at Google's annual developers conference includes releasing a new "AI mode" option in the United States. The feature makes interacting with Google's search engine more like having a conversation with an expert capable of answering questions on just about any topic imaginable.

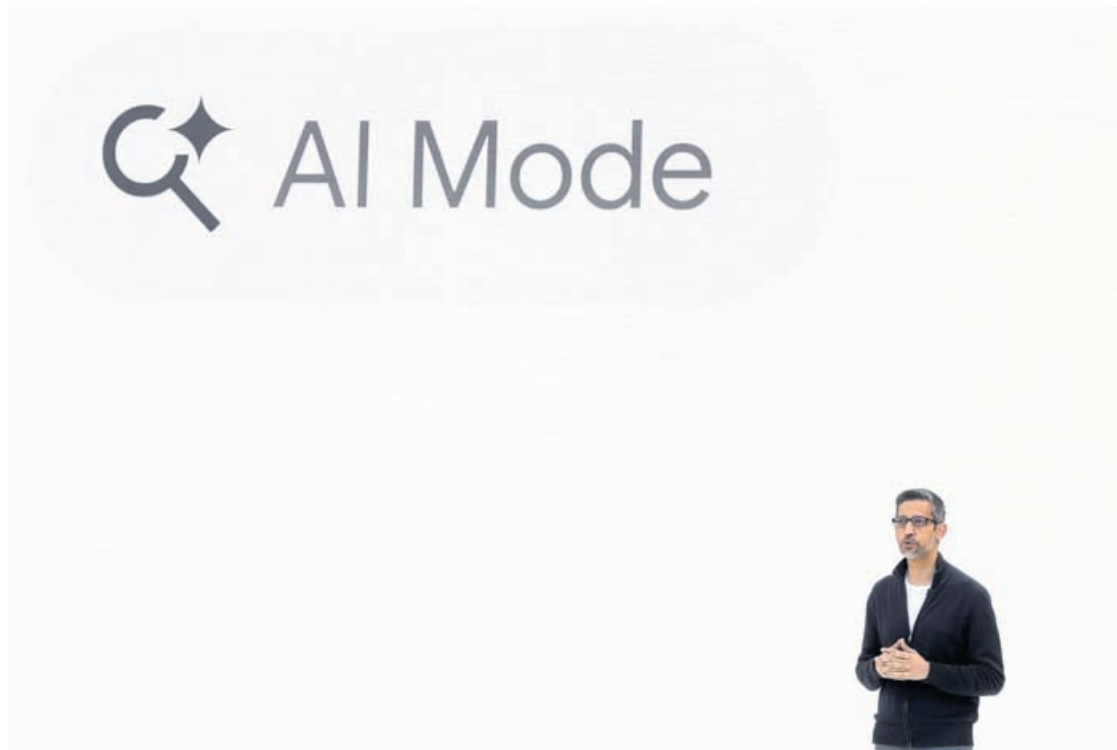
AI mode is being offered to all comers in the U.S. just two-and-a-half-months after the company began testing with a limited Labs division audience.

Google is also feeding its latest AI model, Gemini 2.5, into its search algorithms and will soon begin testing other AI features, such as the ability to automatically buy concert tickets and conduct searches through live video feeds.

In another example of Google's all-in approach to AI, the company revealed it is planning to leverage the technology to re-enter the smart glasses market with a new pair of Android XR-powered spectacles. The preview of the forthcoming device, which includes a hands-free camera and a voice-powered AI assistant, comes 13 years after the debut of "Google Glass," a product that the company scrapped after a public backlash over privacy concerns.

Google didn't say when its Android XR glasses will be available or how much they will cost, but disclosed they will be designed in partnership with Gentle Monster and Warby Parker. The glasses will compete against a similar product already on the market from Facebook parent Meta Platforms and Ray-Ban.

**AI's big role in Google**



Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai speaks at a Google I/O event in Mountain View, Calif., Tuesday, May 20, 2025.

Associated Press

## search

The expansion builds upon a transformation that Google began a year ago with the introduction of conversational summaries called "AI overviews" that have been increasingly appearing at the top of its results page and eclipsing its traditional rankings of web links.

About 1.5 billion people now regularly engage with "AI overviews," according to Google, and most users are now entering longer and more complex queries. "What all this progress means is that we are in a new phase of the AI platform shift, where decades of research are now becoming reality for people all over the world," Google CEO Sundar Pichai said before a packed crowd in an amphitheater near the company's Mountain View, California, headquarters.

## AI ripples across the internet

Although Pichai and other Google executives predicted AI overviews would trigger more searches and ultimately more clicks to other sites, it hasn't worked out that way so far, according to the findings of search optimization firm BrightEdge. Clickthrough rates from Google's search results

have declined by nearly 30% during the past year, according to BrightEdge's recently released study, which attributed the decrease to people becoming increasingly satisfied with AI overviews.

The decision to make AI mode broadly available after a relatively short test period reflects Google's confidence that the technology won't habitually spew misinformation that tarnishes its brand's reputation, and acknowledges the growing competition from other AI-powered search options from the likes of ChatGPT and Perplexity.

## Will AI undercut or empower Google?

The rapid rise of AI alternatives emerged as a recurring theme in legal proceedings that could force Google to dismantle parts of its internet empire after a federal judge last year declared its search engine to be an illegal monopoly.

In testimony during a trial earlier this month, longtime Apple executive Eddy Cue said Google searches done through the iPhone maker's Safari browser have been declining because more people are leaning on AI-powered alternatives. And Google has cited the upheaval being caused by

AI's rise as one of the main reasons that it should only be required to make relatively minor changes to the way it operates its search engine because technology already is changing the competitive landscape.

But Google's reliance on more AI so far appears to be enabling its search engine to maintain its mantle as the internet's main gateway a position that's main reason its corporate parent, Alphabet Inc., boasts a market value of \$2 trillion. During the year ending in March, Google received 136 billion monthly visits, 34 times more than ChatGPT's average of 4 billion monthly visits, according to data compiled by onelittleweb.com.

Even Google's own AI mode acknowledged that the company's search engine seems unlikely to be significantly hurt by the shift to AI technology when a reporter from The Associated Press asked whether its introduction would make the company even more powerful.

"Yes, it is highly likely that Google's AI mode will make Google more powerful, particularly in the realm of information access and online influence," the AI mode responded. The fea-

ture also warns that web publishers should be concerned about AI mode reducing the traffic they get from search results.

## Even more AI waiting in the wings

Google's upcoming tests in its Labs division foreshadow the next wave of AI technology likely to be made available to the masses.

Besides using its Project Mariner technology to test the ability of an AI agent to buy tickets and book restaurant reservations, Google will also experiment with searches done through live video and an opt-in option to give its AI technology access to people's Gmail and other Google apps so it can learn more about a user's tastes and habits. Other features on this summer's test list include a "Deep Search" option that will use AI to dig even deeper into complex topics and another tool that will produce graphical presentations of sports and finance data.

Google is also introducing its equivalent of a VIP pass to all its AI technology with an "Ultra" subscription package that will cost \$250 per month and include 30 terabytes of storage, too. That's a big step beyond Google's previous top-of-the-line package, which is now called "AI Pro," that costs \$20 per month and includes two terabytes of storage. □





# Hybrid power is here: Indianapolis 500 could be dramatically reshaped by jolts of electric juice

By DAVE SKRETTA

AP Sports Writer

**INDIANAPOLIS (AP)** — Helio Castroneves felt an immediate difference — a subtle but noticeable uptick in speed — the first time he utilized the boost of horsepower offered by IndyCar's novel hybrid engines around the imposing oval of Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

The question now facing the four-time Indianapolis 500 winner, along with the rest of the drivers on the 33-car starting grid for the 109th running on Sunday, is how best to capitalize on the hybrid over 200 laps spent entirely on edge.

Empty it entirely and then wait for it to recharge, which might take several laps? Save it for short bursts for passes or to defend? Perhaps use it slowly to run down the leader or build a big advantage once out front?

"There is so much more that goes into this than I think people realize or recognize," acknowledged Indy 500 veteran Graham Rahal, whose father Bobby Rahal won the 1986 race. "It's an interesting thing. I mean, the hybrid, it's quite powerful here. On a single



Josef Newgarden (2) and Graham Rahal drive into the first turn during practice for the Indianapolis 500 auto race at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in Indianapolis, Monday, May 19, 2025.

Associated Press

lap if you utilize it correctly, it does make a hell of a difference in lap time or lap speed." The genesis of the hybridization began years ago, when IndyCar manufacturers Chevrolet and Honda wanted to better align their racing programs with a shift in consumer demand toward hybrid and electric vehicles. But the project was beset by delays as engineers struggled

to fit a bespoke hybrid unit into the IndyCar chassis designed more than a decade ago, and that had to meet certain requirements for weight and safety, among other things. The result was finally unveiled before last year's Indy 500, a design based around ultracapacitors rather than heavy batteries. It provides a quick boost to the existing 2.2-li-

ter, twin-turbocharged V-6 engines before recharging to be used again.

The system was introduced at Mid-Ohio midway through last year's IndyCar season and has been in use ever since.

But it has never been used somewhere like Indianapolis Motor Speedway, where speeds at the end of each straight can hit 240 mph, and the difference be-

tween winning and losing can be measured in thousandths of a second.

"I've had some really interesting conversations with drivers about how of all places where the hybrid is going to make a huge difference, it's going to be at Indianapolis," IndyCar president Doug Boles said. "I asked why and they say, 'Well, you think about Indianapolis, how trimmed out we are especially in qualifying any incremental difference in horsepower makes a difference."

"We're going to see some exciting racing," Boles continued, "and the strategies that I have heard from drivers in terms of talking about how to deploy the hybrid vary wildly. It's going to be fascinating to watch how this goes."

It hasn't gone without its share of problems, either, dating to an open test last month and right through practice Monday. For one thing, the hybrid still checks in at about 100 pounds, which is significant on a car that weighs just 1,600. And all of that weight is in the back of the car, which has dramatically altered the way they are balanced and ultimately perform. □

# Carapaz triumphs in Giro d'Italia stage 11 as Del Toro extends overall lead

**CASTELNOVO NE' MONTI, Italy (AP)** — Ecuadorian cyclist Richard Carapaz soloed to victory at the end of the 11th stage of the Giro d'Italia, while Isaac del Toro kept hold of the leader's pink jersey on Wednesday.

The 31-year-old Carapaz attacked as the peloton caught the breakaway about 4.5 kilometers (three miles) from the end of the last of the three high-category climbs, and he held his pursuers off to clinch his first Giro stage win since he won the Italian race in 2019.

"It was a very, very tough stage, and from the very first climb I saw that so many people were suffering,"

said Carapaz, the Tokyo Olympics road race champion in 2021. "But I knew I had good legs, I chose the right moment and it was almost like a time trial to make it all the way home." The victory also ended a drought for Carapaz, who hadn't won in 308 days, since securing a stage victory in the Tour de France last year. "It's been a long time.

I don't remember how long, but it has been a while," Carapaz said. "So this is very, very special for me, and extremely exciting as well, great work." And I want to dedicate it to my family and to my son.

It's his birthday today hope

they enjoyed what I did today."

Del Toro edged Giulio Ciccone in a bunch sprint for second, about 10 seconds behind Carapaz, at the end of the 186-kilometer (116-mile) slog, that saw 3,800 meters of climbing, from Viareggio on the coast, inland to Castelnovo ne' Monti.

The bonus seconds he earned saw Del Toro extend his overall lead slightly to 31 seconds over Juan Ayuso and one minute, seven seconds ahead of Antonio Tiberi.

The 21-year-old Del Toro became the first Mexican cyclist to lead the Giro when he finished second

on Sunday's ninth stage. Thursday's 12th stage is a 172-kilometer route from

Modena to Viadana.

The Giro ends in Rome on June 1. □



Ecuador's Richard Carapaz of Ef Education - Easypost Team competes during the stage 11 of the Giro d'Italia cycling race, 186 km from Viareggio to Castelnovo ne' Monti, Italy, Wednesday, May 21, 2025.

Associated Press



# NFL teams can keep using the tush push after ban proposal fails at owners meetings, AP source says

By DAVE CAMPBELL  
AP Pro Football Writer  
EAGAN, Minn. (AP) — A proposed ban on the tush push failed on Wednesday at the NFL owners' meetings, according to a person with knowledge of the decision.

The proposed prohibition of the polarizing short-yardage play failed on a 22-10 vote, which will allow quarterbacks to continue to be aided by teammates when plunging into the line.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because details of the discussions by the owners had not yet been made public.

The Philadelphia Eagles brought former center Ja-



Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts, center, and teammates run the tush push play during the NFL championship playoff football game against the Washington Commanders, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2025, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

son Kelce, one of the players who fueled the success of the tush push, to the meetings in Minnesota with owner Jeffrey Lurie to provide more clarity around the play.

Also, the Detroit Lions withdrew their proposal to reseed teams for the playoffs in order of record rather than awarding the first four spots to division winners before a vote was taken, according to a person familiar with the situation. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team's decision had not been announced.

The owners did approve modifications to the kick-off, which was drastically redone before last season. With the goal of increasing the recovery rate of onside attempts, teams may try them at any point in the game when trailing rather than just in the fourth quarter. Kicking team players, other than the kicker, can now move one yard forward.

After the tush push vote was taken, the Eagles posted a picture on social media of quarterback Jalen Hurts on the verge of a short-yardage attempt against the Green Bay Packers with the caption, "Push on." The Packers put their name on the proposal to ban offensive players from pushing, pulling, lifting, grasping or encircling a runner.

Kelce, a seven-time Pro Bowl pick who retired after the 2023 season, said recently he wasn't as concerned about a ban of the tush push as he was about clearing up misconceptions it poses an injury risk and was partially responsible for his decision to end his career.

"I'll come out of retirement today if you tell me all I've got to do is run 80 tush pushes to play in the NFL," Kelce said on the New Heights podcast with his brother Travis Kelce. "I'll do that gladly. It'll be the easiest job in the world." □



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